

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for automatically populating an interactive messaging contact list, the apparatus comprising:

a retrieval module configured to retrieve contact information corresponding to online users from a plurality of contact sources residing on a user's computer and associated with a user including at least one electronic address book;

a validation module configured to verify which of the online users are valid users of an interactive messaging service provided by a messaging server, to interactively prompt the user during a single online session to accept or reject the contact information for each valid user, and ~~online user and validate the contact information on a messaging server~~ to provide validated contact information, the validated contact information comprising the contact information for the online users who are valid users and are accepted by the user; and

an insertion module configured to add the validated contact information to an interactive messaging contact list; and

wherein at least a portion of the retrieval module, validation module and the insertion module comprise at least one of logic hardware elements and executable code, the executable code stored on one or more computer readable media.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the known address book format is selected from the group consisting of a Lotus Notes format, an Eudora Mail format, and a Microsoft Outlook format.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the retrieval module is further configured to extract contact information by parsing an email address retrieved from the plurality of contact sources.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the retrieval module is further configured to extract contact information by parsing a first and last name retrieved from the plurality of contact sources.

6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the validation module is further configured to prompt a user to resolve conflicts in contact information.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A method for automatically populating an interactive messaging contact list, the method comprising:

retrieving contact information corresponding to online users associated with a user from a plurality of contact sources residing on a user's computer including at least one electronic address book;

interactively prompting the user in a single online session to accept or reject the contact information for each online user;

~~validating the contact information on~~ verifying which of the online users are valid users of an interactive messaging service provided by a messaging server to provide validated contact information, the validated contact information comprising the contact information for the online users who are valid users and are accepted by the user; and

adding the validated contact information to an interactive messaging contact list.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the known address book format is selected from the group consisting of a Lotus Notes format, an Eudora Mail format, and a Microsoft Outlook format.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, further comprising parsing the contact information.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein parsing the contact information comprises resolving a first and last name.

13. (Original) The method of claim 8, further comprising prompting a user to resolve conflicts in the contact information.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, further comprising enabling a user to selectively insert contacts into the interactive messaging contact list.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising generating a confirmation request for an inserted contact.

16. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for automatically populating an interactive messaging contact list, the apparatus comprising:

means for retrieving contact information corresponding to online users associated with a user from a plurality of contact sources local to a user's computer including at least one electronic address book;

means for prompting the user to accept or reject the contact information for each online user;

means for ~~validating the contact information on~~ verifying which of the online users are valid users of an interactive messaging service provided by a messaging server to provide validated contact information, the validated contact information comprising the contact information for the online users who are valid users and are accepted by the user; and

means for adding the validated contact information to an interactive messaging contact list,

wherein at least one of means for retrieving contact information, means for prompting the user to accept or reject the contact information, means for validating the contact information, and means for adding the validated contact information comprise at least one of logic hardware elements and executable code, the executable code stored on one or more computer readable media.

17. (Currently Amended) A system for automatically populating an interactive messaging contact list, the system comprising:

a client computer configured to retrieve contact information corresponding to online users associated with a user from a plurality of contact sources including at least one electronic address book, the contact sources residing on the client computer;

the client computer further configured to interactively prompt the user in a single online session to accept or reject the contact information for each online user;

a messaging server configured to ~~validate the contact information~~ verify which of the online users are valid users of an interactive messaging service provided by the messaging server to provide validated contact information, the validated contact information comprising the contact information for the online users who are valid users and are accepted by the user; and

the client computer further configured to add the validated contact information to an interactive messaging contact list.

18. (Original) The system of claim 17, wherein the client computer is further configured to prompt a user to resolve conflicts in contact information.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium comprising computer readable program code configured to carry out a method for automatically populating an interactive messaging contact list, the method comprising:

retrieving contact information corresponding to online users associated with a user from a plurality of contact sources residing on a user's computer including at least one electronic address book;

interactively prompting the user in a single online session to accept or reject the contact information for each online user;

~~validating the contact information on~~ verifying which of the online users are valid users of an interactive messaging service provided by a messaging server to provide validated contact information, the validated contact information comprising the contact information for the online users who are valid users and are accepted by the user; and

adding the validated contact information to an interactive messaging contact list.

21. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of claim 20, wherein the method further comprises prompting a user to resolve conflicts in contact information.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Original) The computer readable storage medium of claim 20, wherein the method further comprises generating a confirmation request for an inserted contact.